

penalties, reaching not only to the individual himself, but to those who should come after him, to the third and fourth generations. What was idolatry under the Jewish dispensation? I say, sir, that it was treason, and the only treason known to the Jewish law. God was their great Legislator. He was the great Executive. He was the great embodiment of the Judiciary, and of every system and part of that government. It all concentrated in Him. Hence idolatry, which was the recognition of another God not known to their law, another authority not recognized by their government, was treason, and the only treason which could exist under the Jewish dispensation; and it was with especial reference to the sin of treason that God enacted those fearful penalties.

That I understand is the question under consideration before this Convention to-day, covered by the amendment of the gentleman from Baltimore city, (Mr. Stirling.) If it was consistent and in harmony with the principles of divine government to enact a law, the penalty of which should reach not only to the individual transgressor, but to succeeding generations; and if that general principle has been incorporated in the principles of Christianity and been re-enacted by our Saviour, then they hold good to-day, and are as applicable to the circumstances that surround us to-day as they were under the circumstances that existed at the time these fearful words were uttered.

I think that those who met in Convention to frame the Constitution of the General Government, the organic law of the nation, did right when they put into that organic law a provision specifying that the consequences to the traitor should be the forfeiture of his estate without any conditions or qualifications whatever. I am in favor of conforming, in our organic law, to the organic law of the United States Government. I am therefore in favor of the adoption of the amendment of the gentleman from Baltimore city.

It is not to be wondered at that gentlemen should labor to screen their friends from the consequences which legally attach to their insane treason. But the question for us to consider is: What is right? What will conform our organic law upon this subject to the fundamental principle recognized in the Constitution of the United States, and emanating from the fountain of all good government? I say, for one, that the amendment of the gentleman from Baltimore city will conform our organic law to the organic law of the United States, and will conform it also to the generally recognized principles which lie at the foundation of all good government. I shall therefore vote against the amendment of the gentleman from Prince George's (Mr. Clarke) and for the adoption of the amendment of the gentleman from Baltimore city (Mr. Stirling.)

Mr. CHAMBERS. I do not mean to go into an elaborate argument unnecessarily upon the remarks of the reverend gentleman. I will only say that I am not quite willing to remain under the imputation of adding to texts of Scripture. It is not my business to devote my whole life to the study of Scripture, as it is the duty of that gentleman, who however I see can spare a portion of his time to devote to politics, leaving some other person to attend to the appropriate duties of his profession in ministering to the souls committed to his care. However zealously he may have studied that holy book he has introduced here, he has evidently not quite so studiously examined the Constitution of the United States when he tells us that the Constitution of the United States allows the forfeiture of the property of the traitor without any qualification. If the gentleman will spare another portion of his time from the special labors of his calling to read the Constitution, he will find that directly the reverse is true. The Constitution of the United States has carefully prohibited the confiscation of property in just so many words. Judge Story says in his treatise on the Constitution, and certainly he is as well versed in the law as the gentleman in his profession, that it has imposed on Congress two limitations on the punishment of treason. Those limitations are: 1st. There shall be no corruption of blood. 2d. There shall be no confiscation of property. I merely rose to correct the gentleman who has attempted to correct your humble servant.

Mr. CLARKE. I do not rise to add anything to what has been said in reference to the statement made by the gentleman from Kent (Mr. Chambers.) I agree perfectly with him in that statement. Although it has not been my avocation to expound the Scriptures, among men, I try to read the Bible, and I try to act up to the principles and precepts of it. I am not by my calling so thoroughly conversant with the Bible as the gentleman from Caroline (Mr. Todd) may be supposed to be, if he carries out properly the duties of a good shepherd over his flock; but I would quietly ask him here, since he has brought the holy book and read to us to-day from its sacred pages, where is his flock?

Mr. TODD. If the gentleman desires an answer, I will give it now. I have no pastoral charge, and have not had for three years.

Mr. CLARKE. Then you have devoted yourself to politics for three years?

Mr. STOCKBRIDGE. I rise to a point of order; that this is entirely irrelevant to the matter before the Convention.

Mr. CLARKE. I merely wish, in reference to the scriptural injunction which has been quoted in vindication of the amendment of the gentleman from Baltimore city, to read the 18th chapter of Ezekiel.